

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 29, 2005. Claims 1 to 31 and 46 to 64 are now pending in the application, with Claims 32 to 45 having been canceled, and Claims 61 to 64 having been added. Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46 are the independent claims herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 60 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,611,050 (Theimer) in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0007422 (Bennett) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,633,932 (Davis). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention as defined by independent Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46 concerns a user obtaining exclusive control over a device's capabilities, such as the printing capabilities of a printer. According to the invention, the user requests to obtain exclusive control over the device's capabilities, whereby the device determines whether it is available for the user to obtain control. If so, the user is provided with exclusive control of the device's capabilities. However, if the device is not available for the user to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities, the user is added to a reservation queue of users requesting exclusive control of the device's capabilities and then, when the user reaches a first position within the reservation queue, the user is provided with exclusive control of the device's capabilities. The user can then request to process a job using the device's capabilities once the user has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, and the requested job is added to a job queue of jobs to be processed using the

device's capabilities. In either case, once the user has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, at least one job within the job queue, corresponding to a user other than the user who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, is deferred from being processed during a period in which the user, who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities maintains exclusive control of the device's capabilities.

As a result, a user can request to obtain control over a device, and once control has been obtained (either immediately or after the user reaches the first position within the user reservation queue), the user can then request a job be processed by the device, where the job is added to a queue and can be processed promptly by the user, while other jobs in the queue are deferred from being processed during the period in which the user maintains control.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of, in a case where it is determined that a device is not available for a user to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities, adding the user to a reservation queue of users requesting exclusive control of the device's capabilities, and then providing exclusive control of the device's capabilities to the user when the user reaches a first position within the reservation queue, wherein once the user has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, at least one job within a job queue, corresponding to a user other than the user who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, is deferred

from being processed during a period in which the user, who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, maintains exclusive control of the device's capabilities.

Theimer is merely seen to disclose that a user is remotely identified and a device in close proximity to the location of the user is controlled so as to provide the user with the ability to use the device based on policy information of the user. As readily admitted in the Office Action, Theimer fails to disclose any mechanism for providing the user with control over a particular device that may already in use by another user, or more particularly, that, if the device is not available for the user to obtain exclusive control, the user is added to a reservation queue of users requesting to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities.

Bennett is merely seen to disclose that various types of equipment are controlled by software applications, where more than one application can access the equipment to perform an operation. According to paragraphs 92 to 96, the types of access are either "exclusive read" access, "read" access, "exclusive write" access, or "write" access, where the read and write access privileges are mutually exclusive. If one application has been granted "exclusive read" access, another application cannot be granted either "exclusive read" or "read" access. Likewise, if one application has been granted "exclusive write" access, another application cannot be granted either "exclusive write" or "write" access. In a case where a requested resource has been "taken" by another application, the requesting application is placed in a wait queue (depending on the priority of the requesting application), where there are 4 types of wait queues (read, write, exclusive read, and exclusive write) corresponding to the requested type of access. The

read and write queues are unlimited in depth, but the exclusive read and exclusive write queues can only accommodate one application. Thus, Theimer merely discloses that an application submits a request for access to perform a job which forms the basis of the access request, and if access request is denied, the request may be added to a wait queue.

Thus, while Bennett may add an access request to a wait queue, the access request itself is the requested job rather than a user that is requesting to obtain control. As such, Bennett is unlike the present invention in which a user is first provided with exclusive control, either due to the device being available or after the user reaches a first position within a reservation queue, and once the user has been provided with exclusive control, the user then requests to process a job with the job being added to a job queue. Accordingly, even if Theimer and Bennett could have been combined at the time of the invention, such a combination still would not have resulted in the features of Claims 1, 16, 31 and 46.

Davis is merely seen to disclose a system for deferring printing of a document until a printing node locally authenticates the intended recipient. According to the patent, a print job is sent to a printing node along with an electronic header which informs the printing node to defer printing. The printing node then stores the print job until it receives authentication, at which time the document is decrypted and printed. Nowhere, however, does Davis teach or suggest that the print job corresponds to a user other than a user who has been provided with exclusive control of the printer's capabilities, or that the print job is deferred from being printed during a period in which the user that has been provided with exclusive control maintains exclusive control over the device's capabilities.

Thus, reviewing each of the individual features of Theimer, Bennett and Davis, Davis would merely have added to Theimer the ability to send a print job having a header indicating that the job requires authentication to a printer so that the job is deferred from being printed until the user is authenticated. Once the user approaches the printer of Theimer, the user is identified and is provided with the ability to use the device based on policy information of the user. Presumably, one type of use may be for the user to authenticate themselves such that the deferred print job of Davis is printed out. However, such a combination fails to disclose that the user is provided with exclusive control of the device's capabilities, or that other jobs are deferred from being processed during a period in which the user, who has been provided exclusive control of the device's capabilities, maintains exclusive control of the device's capabilities. Moreover, there is no disclosure of what would happen if the device is being used by another user, or more particularly, that the user is placed in a queue of users requesting to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities.

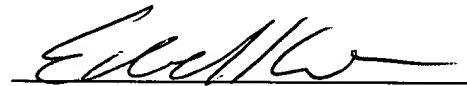
Bennett is not seen to overcome this deficiency. Specifically, adding the features of Bennett to the foregoing combination of Theimer and Davis would have, at best, merely resulted in the user, once they gain access to the device, using an application to submit a job request, whereby the job request would be placed in a wait queue until the job can be processed. Thus, the proposed combination clearly fails to teach that a user requesting to obtain exclusive control, and if the device is not available, placing the user in a reservation queue of users requesting to obtain exclusive control of the device's capabilities.

In view of the forgoing amendments and remarks, all of Claims 1 to 64 are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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